



VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 22ND MEETING

Chairman: Mr. NAIK (Pakistan)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 31 TO 49 AND 121 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. VELISSAROPOULOS (Greece) (interpretation from French):

Mr. Chairman, I associate myself with all those who, having spoken before me, have expressed their satisfaction at your election as Chairman of this Committee. I do so all the more gladly since, some years ago, I saw you at work in Geneva, where you gave proof of your outstanding talents. May I also extend my congratulations to the Vice-Chairmen and the other officers of the Committee.

Here we are at the third session of the General Assembly to be held since the first special session devoted to disarmament and half-way between the first and the second, which is to be held in 1982. It is only natural, therefore, that my delegation, like so many others which preceded it, should take stock of the work that has been done and of the hopes that have been disappointed.

While not allowing ourselves to be carried away by illusions, my delegation will attempt not to succumb to the temptation of seeing nothing of promise in the work accomplished because far too often we have a tendency to measure achievements in terms of dreams which, since the existence of human societies, have obsessed noble minds, it is true, but which sinned by excessive enthusiasm and mistook the nature and psychology of human communities and their complexity.

Any assessment of efforts in the field of disarmament should take into consideration the fact that we are proceeding on the basis of the Final Document and that, as far as we are concerned, the deadlines begin from the time of its adoption, because it was on the basis of its mandate that we have now begun our work. First we should note, then, that the mandate was entrusted to us two and a half years ago and that it is therefore in this time-frame that we who received the mandate from the Final Document should measure our progress and our failures.

(Mr. Velissaropoulos, Greece)

A second element which might serve as a valid criterion for the evaluation of our efforts is that nothing has been done in a vacuum, but, rather, within an international climate where, generally, fluctuations tend to favour or hamper efforts towards arms control or, subsequently, towards general and complete disarmament. We must therefore consider our problems from these two standpoints, and I shall begin with the second, the international situation.

No one in the course of previous statements, has questioned the fact that the international situation has in no way helped our efforts in favour of disarmament. Far from it, the situation in the Middle East and in Asia has become worse, wars and military interventions are taking place even as I speak, mistrust is growing constantly, thus creating throughout the world a climate where the sense of national and international security is in decline. The very terms of certain statements made in this Committee have lost much of the moderation to which, by tacit understanding, we had tried with more or less success to limit them at previous sessions. Thus for example, one delegation felt that it had to affirm that it considered as extremely regrettable the fact that the Government of Greece should have decided to renew its participation in the military wing of the Atlantic alliance. That same delegation went so far as to describe the comments made by certain governments on this subject as cynical. While not wishing to drift too far away from the subject of this statement, I must point out that Greece is a country profoundly attached to peace, co-operation and détente, that it entertains excellent relations with all countries whatever their political inclination and social structure, and, finally, that it has always opted for the path of negotiation or the settlement of its disputes by peaceful means. History, moreover, confirms as much.

(Mr. Velissaropoulos, Greece)

On the other hand, I feel I have an obligation to recall to that delegation that we have never ceased to be part of the Atlantic alliance, which is a defensive organization. We joined it because it is just that, and because the United Nations Charter, in its Article 51, explicitly stipulates that

'Nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence...'

Every State is sovereign and preserves, when it is truly independent, the full freedom of its options in order to preserve its security in scrupulous compliance with the spirit and letter of the United Nations Charter and international law.

In addition, may I point out to that delegation that we could not have returned to the military wing of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), without having left it in the first place and that in so doing we must at all times have been exercising our freedom of choice.

(Mr. Velissaropoulos, Greece)

I turn now to the main purpose of this statement, which is an evaluation of the results achieved in the contexts I have just described, that is, in light of the mandate of the Final Document, the time that has elapsed since then, and the international situation.

The first observation we must make is that the potency of the movement set in motion by the Final Document has not been irrevocably impaired by the deterioration of the international situation, although it has suffered considerably thereby, particularly in that it has failed to increase. The responsible bodies have pursued with laudable energy the tasks entrusted to them, because the spirit engendered by the first special session on Disarmament has been able to withstand, at least partially, the impact of external factors. If those bodies have been unable to produce what we might have expected of them, they have none the less furnished, quite realistically, what we might have expected in light of current circumstances.

On that point, I should like to refer briefly to the modest but nevertheless considerable progress achieved between the thirty-third and thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly.

For example, there was the United Nations Conference on Prohibitions or Restrictions of Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to have Indiscriminate Effects. An agreement was reached on the text of a convention and three annexed protocols relating to undetectable fragments, land-mines and booby traps, and incendiary weapons. This represents real progress both from the humanitarian point of view and from the point of view of arms control, because those texts take a step forward beyond the Hague Convention and extend the field of application of the principle of waging war in a less inhumane manner, if there is such a thing as humane war.

Next, there is the report drawn up by members of the tripartite negotiation on the comprehensive nuclear-test ban. We had hoped for more, but we must note with satisfaction that the negotiations took into account the

(Mr. Velissaropoulos, Greece)

urgent need for an effective procedure for international verification and that they were focused on the creation of a multilateral treaty. There is still much to be done, for we must arrive at a precise definition of methods of verification and agree on the concept that we are not seeking a moratorium, but rather a definitive agreement.

The second session of the Commission on Disarmament for the first time carried out a preliminary discussion of a very complex question relating to conventional disarmament. We would like to hope, and we regard it as imperative, that the General Assembly at its current session will approve the carrying out of a study on all aspects of conventional disarmament to be submitted to the second special session of disarmament. I need hardly stress the importance of this, which is commensurate with the number and extent of conventional wars and of their devastating cumulative effect. Greece, in all its statements at earlier sessions, has emphasized this fundamental aspect of disarmament on which, as experience has shown, international security most often depends.

We are also gratified at the report on regional disarmament drafted by a group of experts at the initiative of Belgium. This is a very thorough study of the problem that we will be called upon to consider during the present session. Regional agreements should be easier to reach since, after all, the negotiations relating to them take place between a more limited number of States. However, as paragraph 83 of the Final Document states, agreements of this sort must take into account -- as must all agreements for that matter -- security needs, the right of self-defence and the need to maintain a balance of forces within the framework of an effective system of verifications. That balance is one of the fundamental tenets with which all disarmament efforts must comply. History, indeed, has taught us the sad lesson that most, if not all, wars have been the result of destabilization.

We consider that the European conference on disarmament, as a follow-up to the Madrid meeting on security and co-operation in Europe, will be a

(Mr. Velissaropoulos, Greece)

constructive element in the disarmament effort, which is why we fully subscribe to the initiative taken by France in this regard.

The proposal of the United States of America and the Soviet Union to begin negotiations on the limitation of land-based medium-range nuclear weapons within the framework of the SALT negotiations is another positive element. On the other hand, we hope that the SALT II agreement will soon be ratified in order to pave the way for the SALT III negotiations.

Another area where some progress has been achieved is that of the study of the adoption of confidence-building measures between States that is already under way pursuant to General Assembly resolution 34/87 B, proposed by the Federal Republic of Germany, of which Greece was a co-sponsor. Judging from the progress report on that study submitted in document A/35/422 of 23 September 1980, there has been considerable progress, albeit still limited, towards a convergence of views. This is an important study for, as so many representatives have stressed, confidence-building measures are a conditio sine qua non for any progress in negotiations on disarmament. Some progress has already been achieved in the Helsinki negotiations, and it is useful to draw certain elements from that.

We must not omit from this brief examination a mention of the important progress achieved in the negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union on the total prohibition of chemical weapons. We must note with satisfaction the identification of questions to be dealt with in negotiating a convention, while regretting the lack of progress on one decisive point, namely, the methods of verification. It cannot be repeated too often: disarmament without the adoption of adequate measures for verification is unrealizable.

My delegation also wishes to mention a favorable development regarding the organization of the work of the Disarmament Committee in Geneva. Experience has taught us, in fact, that very often when we resort to working groups we have better chances of achieving tangible results, since they create a more intimate atmosphere.

In enumerating some of the encouraging achievements realized since the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly, my delegation has no illusions about the enormity of the task before us. However, we must highlight the modest progress achieved since our mandate was entrusted to us in the Final Document of the Special Session in order not to fall prey to complete scepticism and even a kind of cynicism.

(Mr. Velissaropoulos, Greece)

The signing of an agreement on the global and total cessation of nuclear tests, on a balanced reduction of conventional weapons and on adequate confidence-building measures is still far from being achieved. We hope that at the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament it will be possible to review the application of the Final Document of the first session and examine how we can facilitate its implementation and supplement it. That should be done through the adoption of a comprehensive programme that must clearly take into account the principle that progress in disarmament can only be achieved in conditions that safeguard the security of countries. In fact those conditions cannot be brought about without the maintenance or the restoration of the balance of conventional and nuclear forces at the lowest possible level, without the possibility of verification within the framework of a system allowing for visibility and comparability and without improving the international climate. Anything else done to achieve not only the final objectives but even the advanced stages of arms control and the cessation of the arms race would come up against a stone wall of mistrust. Hence, in our debates, studies and draft resolutions we must bear those considerations in mind and we must proceed in good faith, with common sense and zeal, but also with patience, towards the implementation of the Final Document, which includes a sufficient number of provisions that enable us to hope that we can avoid being lulled by the melodious yet deceitful song of the sirens and thus our efforts will be crowned with success and we can live in peace, security and happiness and share with the poorer peoples the fruits of our labours which today are being squandered on armaments.

Mr. RABETAFIKA (Madagascar)(interpretation from French): Mr. Chairman, I should first of all like to associate my delegation with those that have expressed their congratulations to you and to your fellow-officers of the Committee, and I should like to express to you our happiness at seeing you preside over our proceedings. It is obvious that your qualities are well-known to us and we can rest assured that our Committee will benefit to the utmost from your talents as a negotiator and your extensive knowledge of disarmament and security matters.

(Mr. Rabetafika, Madagascar)

Not a single delegation can fail to recognize the necessary interdependence between international security and disarmament and while we all acknowledge that our activities in the United Nations must lead towards the establishment of global, credible and durable security, we do, however, react differently when it comes to defining true priorities and advocating approaches that will best serve the attainment of the common objective, that of ensuring universal peace and stability.

During the present debate it has been frequently asserted that the deterioration of the international situation, due to the persistence of focal points of tension, to a new set of relationships between military blocs and to the existence of open conflicts, has made it impossible in the past and will continue to make it impossible in the future to envisage true progress in negotiations on arms control. That is simply noting a fact that no one can reject out of hand but which curiously recalls the endless deliberations of the 1960s where speakers waxed so eloquent about the respective merits of partial, related or collateral measures and those of the 1970s where the virtues of pragmatism and realism were so dinned into us that real disarmament was apparently neglected.

We are entitled to wonder, now that a consensus seems to be emerging on what can and must be done, whether we are still capable of mustering sufficient determination to stop raising spuriously reasoned obstacles to disarmament. Have we to wait until ideal conditions come about in order to break certain deadlocked situations, when it is only reasonable to admit that the resolving of those situations would only serve to create an atmosphere conducive to the taking in common of comprehensive, urgent and significant measures on disarmament?

Similarly we are not sure that the various pretexts advanced to defer decisive actions in the arms control field stem from a genuinely responsible attitude, because if there really is determination to negotiate successfully in all quarters it is difficult to agree that for some that determination remains subjected to what are, after all, secondary factors the effects of which do not in any way depend on what is done in the area of disarmament.

(Mr. Rabetofika, Madagascar)

Everything goes on as if one wanted to hide behind carefully selected events and an erroneous understanding of the interdependence between security and disarmament, in order to conceal a clear desire not to keep promises made at the international level. We can only denounce such an attitude that legitimizes the unilateral rejection of responsibility and we denounce it all the more vigorously because certain Powers are proceeding towards a veritable reversal of values in order to justify the maintenance and resumption of the arms race, in virtue of the primacy of a national or selective contractual security, a primacy that we thought had been abandoned since the tenth special session.

It is normal that at a time when more and more is being said about shared responsibility that we should oppose the concept that global security should depend on the security of some of us, which in its turn can only be precarious because there is nothing to guarantee it either in time or in space and it remains at the mercy of political vagaries and human and technical error.

It is always expedient to deal with cause and effects in order to confuse them, but if we confine ourselves to disarmament without necessarily having to go back to facts and events that are pulled out of the hat to justify a negative position, is it really possible to say that real progress towards disarmament and arms control has been achieved since the last session?

(Mr. Rabetafika, Madagascar)

What is the situation with SALT II? Have we stamped out vertical or qualitative nuclear proliferation only to remain subject to horizontal non-proliferation? When will the nuclear-weapon States make up their minds to discharge their obligations under article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty? What has been done to prevent States like South Africa or Israel from acquiring a nuclear capacity beyond a threshold where no international control is effective? What about the reduction of military activities in the Indian Ocean? What remains of our illusions about the reduction of military budgets? How is it that Europe, which has suffered the ravages of two unprecedented wars, remains the possible theatre of a conventional or nuclear war?

It may be retorted that the problems of disarmament form a whole and that their complexity does not really lend itself to partial or immediate solutions. For our part, we maintain that the answers to the questions we have just asked have been given by the measures recently taken, be it the automatic increase of military expenditures, the manufacture and deployment of new medium-range nuclear missiles, the proclamation of a new strategy providing for limited or partial use of nuclear weapons, all-out research in order to bring about military superiority for the sake of an alleged manifest destiny, or the establishment of a rapid deployment force designed to operate in so-called zones of vital interest and equipped with the most sophisticated conventional or nuclear weapons.

The negative effect of procrastination and of these measures needs no further arguing, and it is obviously these things which are responsible for the deterioration of the international situation, rather than the crisis which is now gripping Western Asia, of which so much is being made.

On 15 October, Ambassador Garcia Robles, as the official, authorized spokesman for the Group of 21, made a remarkable statement in this Committee, and I am sure he will permit me in my turn to say that the priorities he outlined for us to avoid the outbreak of a nuclear war stemming from a

(Mr. Rabetafika, Madagascar)

collective suicidal streak are all priorities to which we subscribe: namely, the ratification and entry into force of SALT II as soon as possible, conclusion of a SALT III agreement with the ultimate objective of the total destruction of existing nuclear stockpiles, a treaty banning all nuclear weapon testing before the thirty-sixth session and the immediate application of a moratorium pending conclusion of that treaty.

These concerns share common ground with the declared policy of the non-aligned countries on nuclear disarmament and also with the proposal submitted on 23 September to the General Assembly by the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union for inscription of the item "Urgent measures to reduce the danger of war". From the standpoint of the Final Declaration adopted at the end of the tenth special session, we can see that the Soviet proposals on negative security guarantees, the cessation of nuclear tests and the priority to be given to nuclear disarmament are in all respects in keeping with the Programme of Action, to which we would refer - in particular, its paragraphs 50, 51, 58 and 59.

It would be interesting, in this connexion, to remind those who refuse to discuss these proposals or have dismissed them as mere declarations of intent, that the General Assembly has declared that

"... all States, in particular nuclear-weapon States, should consider as soon as possible" -

I stress, "as soon as possible" -

"various proposals designed to secure the avoidance of the use of nuclear weapons, the prevention of nuclear war and related objectives, where possible through international agreements, and thereby ensure that the survival of mankind is not endangered." (resolution S-10/2, para. 58)

This quotation calls for no comment which might be considered as uncomplimentary to those who, for reasons of expedience or convenience, forget their responsibilities. Moreover, those who advocate priority for conventional disarmament should be gratified at the fact that the Soviet Union should have established a link between the freezing of activities of military blocs and conventional disarmament, on the one hand, and control of the arms race, on the other hand.

(Mr. Rabetafika, Madagascar)

Such a link may very well not suit other Powers eager, above all, to preserve a system which preceded and maintained the cold war. But we must acknowledge that the existence of military blocs has not succeeded in providing an absolute guarantee of international security, and that their possible expansion has even become an additional source of insecurity, to the extent that the search for a balance seems susceptible of no limits.

Because we do not want the Programme of Action of the tenth special session to remain a dead letter, and because, faithful to the principles of the non-aligned, we believe that our individual and collective security depends rather on the elimination of military blocs and, hence, on the prevention of any danger of conventional or nuclear war, we give our support to the Soviet proposal. The solution is not ideal, and its limited wording is proof of this. But, at least, it has the merit of taking the form of a faithful discharge of internationally assumed commitments.

Still within the field of nuclear disarmament, my delegation has noted with great interest the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa (A/35/402). The conclusions of the report are clear.

First, South Africa has the technical means to manufacture nuclear weapons and the necessary delivery vehicles, and by mid-1979 it could have produced sufficient uranium to acquire at least some nuclear weapons.

Secondly, nuclear weapons would take on especially ominous dimensions in the hands of a régime desperate to preserve white supremacy by strengthening by all possible means what it calls "the bastion of southern Africa".

Thirdly, the acquisition of nuclear weapons by that régime would have to be treated as a grave threat to the security of African States and to international peace.

Fourthly, South Africa's progress and increasing sophistication in the nuclear field has been helped by the co-operation of several countries, corporations and institutions.

(Mr. Rabetafika, Madagascar)

Fifthly, South Africa has been able to adopt a policy of so-called latent proliferation, which consists in secretly stockpiling nuclear weapons while refraining from testing or openly deploying them.

Those conclusions, eloquent in themselves, fully justify the fears we have constantly expressed over the policy of certain Western Powers towards South Africa's nuclear capacity. They show that our actions, past and present, stem neither from deliberate partiality nor from anti-apartheid hysteria. However, we should like to comment for a moment on one of the conclusions of the report dealing with latent proliferation.

(Mr. Rabetafika, Madagascar)

Here we have, then, a third kind of proliferation, and as a preliminary, we wonder whether it would not be appropriate for one of the working groups of the Committee on Disarmament, in particular the working group on nuclear disarmament, the establishment of which was advocated by the Group of 21, to deal with this problem and outline the policy we should follow in order to control or verify, destroy and eventually establish sanctions against this kind of proliferation.

By way of conclusion, I should like to repeat an extract from the appeal issued on 24 September at Sofia, Bulgaria, by the World Parliament of Peoples for Peace, a meeting in which the Democratic Republic of Madagascar participated:

"Act now.

"Let us stop the world from coming ever closer to the nuclear precipice. Let us put aside all that divides us and join together to defeat the menace of nuclear war. Let our voice be heard as never before." (A/C.1/35/7, Annex)

Mr. BLOMBERG (Finland): In a statement on 22 October my delegation put forth its views on several issues, in particular on European and other regional questions and the assurances of non-use of nuclear weapons. I should like now to address myself to a number of other issues concerning both nuclear and conventional disarmament.

The record of arms limitation shows that the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) process is pivotal to the control of nuclear arms as it is to the relations between the leading nuclear Powers. The SALT II agreement is a telling example of the relationship between disarmament and détente. It sets a carefully defined framework of limitations for strategic arms. If that framework were to break down, not only would an unbridled arms race ensue but the limitations agreed to earlier could be undone.

(Mr. Blomberg, Finland)

Finland continues to hope that SALT II can be put into effect without further delay. Largely extraneous political difficulties have complicated the ratification of the agreement, the outcome of seven years of strenuous negotiations between the Soviet Union and the United States. If it is succeeded by further limitations - not only quantitative but also qualitative - of nuclear weapons, SALT II will be a significant step towards making the world safer against the outbreak of nuclear war.

Yet the fact is that, despite efforts and exhortations, the arms race, particularly the nuclear arms race, is assuming new dimensions technologically, conceptually and geographically. Weapons of increased accuracy and manoeuvrability are being introduced.

I have referred to the relationship between disarmament and détente; the reverse side of the coin is the intensification of the arms race. We have noted in that context the proposal submitted by the Soviet Union, entitled "Urgent measures for reducing the danger of war". That proposal contains a number of recommendations concerning both conventional and nuclear weapons and also refers to the question of military alliances. It is obvious that those measures can be successful only if they receive wide support from all quarters, more particularly the co-operation of the permanent members of the Security Council to which the recommendations are explicitly addressed.

The Committee has before it the report of the Secretary-General containing a comprehensive study on nuclear weapons. We welcome that study, conducted by a group of experts under the chairmanship of Ambassador Anders Thunborg of Sweden. We concur in the view that careful study and continuous assessment of nuclear-weapon problems are required to assist the international community in achieving progress in nuclear disarmament.

The comprehensive prohibition of nuclear testing is an essential measure for nuclear arms limitation. It is intrinsically linked with, inter alia, the SALT process and efforts to stop the spread of nuclear weapons. A comprehensive test ban (CTB) would also effectively constrain the development of new nuclear weapons and weapons systems.

(Mr. Blomberg, Finland)

In the interest of both vertical and horizontal non-proliferation, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States, the participants in the tripartite negotiations, should intensify their efforts towards a comprehensive test-ban treaty. For all practical purposes a treaty now appears ready; the remaining difficulties in the way of the submission of a draft treaty to the Committee on Disarmament are largely political.

With regard to the means of verification of a test ban, Finland is actively participating in the work of the Committee on Disarmament's Ad Hoc Group of Seismic Experts in Geneva. Testing has been carried out to improve the detection capability of the Finnish seismic stations proposed for the global network. Our facilities for rapid evaluation of seismic data and reliable daily transmission through the global telecommunication system of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) have also been tested through national and co-operative studies.

The recent Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty has been described as a "failure" or a "disappointment" in some statements in this Committee. My delegation holds a different view. True, the Conference failed to agree on a substantive final document; nevertheless, the operation of the Treaty was reviewed in accordance with its relevant provisions. Identical or similar views were reflected at the Conference on a number of key issues.

The Review Conference confirmed that parties to the Treaty had complied with their non-proliferation commitments. Wide agreement prevailed at the Conference on the functioning of the safeguards régime of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and access to peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Finland continues to believe that the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is the most important arms limitation measure so far. The NPT is the basis for continued efforts to strengthen the non-proliferation régime. The basic weakness of that régime is the lack of universality of the NPT.

International co-operation in the field of peaceful uses of nuclear energy has not proceeded without difficulties and disappointments. Basically,

(Mr. Blomberg, Finland)

those difficulties stem from a fear of nuclear proliferation. The fear is justified; it exists because assurances against military diversion are not considered adequate. A universal non-proliferation commitment, in the first instance, by way of universal adherence to the NPT would be the best way to dispel that fear.

The increased possibility of nuclear-weapons capability in regions where international peace and security are already in jeopardy is a telling reminder of the danger that proliferation would pose to the entire international community.

In a memorandum to be circulated as a document of this Committee the Nordic countries express their views on questions related to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. They stress the need for further measures to promote international confidence that additional States are not seeking nuclear-explosive capability and suggest specific steps to that effect.

(Mr. Blomberg, Finland)

The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones would contribute to non-proliferation. It would also check the introduction of nuclear weapons into new areas. The Treaty of Tlatelolco continues to demonstrate the viability of that approach. In addition, the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is the subject of a number of other items before this Committee. These items pertain to Africa, the Middle East and South Asia. Despite certain difficulties, the proposals have retained their validity. We hope that further progress can be made towards the establishment of such zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned.

Renewed efforts should be made towards the creation of a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean region, a concept related to nuclear-weapon-free zones.

The report of the Committee on Disarmament - the main multilateral negotiating organ in the field of disarmament - clearly shows to what extent these negotiations are a function of the international climate and depend on the state of relations between nations. Although the Committee concentrated on the priority areas defined by the international community, it failed to launch actual negotiations on those issues. Yet, in some important organizational questions, the Committee was able to take decisions which undoubtedly will make its work more effective. We believe that the establishment of ad hoc working groups will permit the Committee to concentrate on the priority issues in a more concrete way conducive to tangible progress.

Finland has welcomed the possibility of States not members of the Committee on Disarmament to take part in the work of the ad hoc working groups. Since 1965 we have maintained a presence in the Committee on Disarmament and its predecessors either by way of special emissaries or permanent observers. Finland intends also in the future to be involved in the work of the Committee on Disarmament to the fullest possible extent.

The Committee on Disarmament has recognized the urgency of the question concerning chemical weapons. It devoted a good deal of its time to this item. All members of the Committee have clearly demonstrated their commitment to work out a comprehensive treaty and made constructive proposals to facilitate these talks. The special meetings at the end of June helped to clarify some complex scientific questions relating to a treaty on chemical weapons.

(Mr. Blomberg, Finland)

The Government of Finland has also endeavoured to contribute to this work within its resources. We have undertaken a major study on some aspects relating to the verification question. This year Finland has submitted to the Committee on Disarmament another report on that project. The project will be continued and further results will be communicated to the Committee on Disarmament as they appear.

The mandate given to the Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons did not allow it to make much progress towards a treaty. We hope that at its next session the Committee on Disarmament can agree on a more concrete mandate, as the representative of Japan, Chairman of the Working Group, has suggested here. In the same spirit, we hope that the bilateral Soviet-American talks on a chemical weapon treaty will soon be concluded and the results transmitted to the Committee on Disarmament.

Another pending question to be solved very soon concerns radiological weapons. These weapons, although not yet in the arsenals of States, can, as the relevant technology advances, become a dangerous means of mass destruction with unimaginable effects. It is encouraging that the Soviet Union and the United States have been able to agree on the contents of a treaty prohibiting these weapons. This work should be continued without delay and concluded at the next session of the Committee on Disarmament.

In the course of this debate, the over-all evaluation of the disarmament and arms control questions has been rather gloomy. Against this background, it is all the more significant that the United Nations Conference on certain conventional weapons was able to conclude its work successfully. The agreement by about 80 States on a general treaty and on three protocols dealing with various conventional weapons was an achievement. The consensus reached at the Conference implies that all sides had to make concessions without compromising their vital security interests. The agreed protocols are clear and substantive. As a real step in both humanitarian and arms limitation terms, the Conference agreed on the prohibition of the use of air-delivered incendiaries against military objects within civilian concentrations.

Unfortunately, it was not possible to include in the protocol on incendiary weapons provisions relating to the protection of combatants. However, the review mechanism in the general treaty makes it possible to return at a later stage to this question and other proposals not decided upon at this Conference.

(Mr. Blomberg, Finland)

Apart from the threat posed by nuclear weapons, the qualitative and quantitative arms race in the field of conventional weapons is in many cases a most immediate threat to security. Conventional weapons also account for the bulk of world military expenditure. In this context, Finland welcomes the Danish proposal on a study on conventional disarmament. That proposal merits the support of the Assembly.

My final remarks relate to the second disarmament decade. As it was a major item on its agenda, the Disarmament Commission at its past session considered the elements to be included in a declaration of the 1980s as the second disarmament decade. Pursuant to the resolution adopted last year on the initiative of Nigeria and a number of other countries, it is now up to the General Assembly to adopt the declaration. The Commission has already reached agreement on a wide range of issues to be incorporated in it. The delegation of Finland will work constructively towards the completion of the draft declaration.

Mr. AL-TOUBI (Oman) (interpretation from Arabic): Mr. Chairman, it is my pleasure on behalf of the delegation of Oman to join those delegations that have preceded me in expressing to you our sincere congratulations on your election as Chairman of the First Committee. We are certain that your experience in the work of the United Nations and, in particular, in the field of disarmament, will be the best guarantee for the successful work of this Committee during the current session.

I should also like to express our congratulations and best wishes for successful work to the other officers of the Committee.

This time every year we listen to the many statements made by the various delegations in which they state their views on the achievements of the past year in the field of disarmament and welcome the degree of progress achieved towards reaching the objectives of disarmament; they also express their hopes and wishes for further achievements in this field.

Unfortunately, and with deep regret, my delegation finds great difficulty in praising any positive achievement made during the past year towards extending the areas of agreement in the field of disarmament. The efforts undertaken to obtain the necessary political will in this field, particularly with respect to the big Powers, have still not borne fruit and the world continues to live in the shadow of nuclear war. Unfortunately, the obvious contradiction between hopes and actions remains and continues to dominate the reality of international life.

Despite the fact that there is general acceptance of the view that disarmament will increase the security of all States in the long term, there are only a few States that are prepared to depend on it as a guarantee and safety measure in the face of the threats of today and the dangers of the future. As a result, most Governments consider that at the present time it is their duty to base their actions on the requirements of their immediate security. They therefore depend on armaments, in view of the absence of an effective system of international security which would lay down the basis of safety and international legitimacy and which would protect all nations, in particular the small countries, from any aggression against their sovereignty and security. Such a system would guarantee their existence, within secure boundaries, from aggression, destruction and intervention in their internal affairs.

(Mr. Al-Toubi, Oman)

The first special session of the General Assembly on disarmament has defined the partial and complete measures of arms control and of disarmament, within the framework of a programme the implementation of which would be directed toward general and complete disarmament, under effective international control. Unfortunately, the basic recommendations of that session have not yet been implemented. In addition, the pace of disarmament negotiations has been very slow and has failed to keep in step with the armaments race and the production and development of more complex nuclear weapons. All that has been taking place along with the continuing deterioration of the international situation, which has been made more complicated by the actions of some major Powers.

In this context, we should like to point out that the military intervention of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan continues to be a source of anxiety for the international community, and especially for the small neighbouring countries which are concerned about their own sovereignty and security.

We share the belief of those who have spoken before us that the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan is a basic requirement for establishing the peaceful conditions necessary for achieving more effective measures disarmament and for putting an end to the arms race, particularly in our area.

We all know that there are close links between stabilizing world peace and security and the achievement of disarmament. Unfortunately, today there are new centres of tension on the international scene. The Middle East problem remains without a solution and Israel continues to implement its policy of annexing additional Arab territories while, at the same time, increasing its military and nuclear potential in co-operation with South Africa. In this connexion, I should like to point out Israel's intention to develop its nuclear capability so as to threaten the Arab world and all the countries of the region. The Secretary-General's report on a comprehensive study of nuclear weapons submitted to this session of the General Assembly pointed out that Israel has refused to sign the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and has instead set forth conditions for direct negotiations among the countries of the region.

(Mr. Al-Toubi, Oman)

In South-East Asia we see the region suffering from armed disputes and foreign military intervention in the affairs of some of the countries.

The Indian Ocean is a region which we hope will become a zone of peace so that the peoples of the countries overlooking the ocean may be able, in conditions of stability and peace, to overcome efforts to involve them in matters related to spheres of influence, so that the region can devote its efforts to construction and rehabilitation rather than become involved in tension. It is an area in which plots are hatched and saboteurs are trained in certain sections in order to serve the expansionist objectives of certain major Powers. Conditions in that area are far different from our hopes and aspirations, and we trust that the efforts undertaken to prepare for the forthcoming conference on the Indian Ocean will be successful.

Oman, true to its belief in peaceful co-existence and the right of peoples to choose their political and economic systems without outside interference, supports those who have called for proclaiming the Middle East, Africa and South-East Asia as nuclear-weapon-free zones. Such action would allow those countries to dedicate all their efforts to the promotion of their economic and social resources in order to serve the prosperity of their people.

Since Oman is one of the countries overlooking the Indian Ocean, we strongly favour having it proclaimed as a zone of peace, as a nuclear-weapon-free zone, which would contribute further to reducing the tension which presently exists in the region.

The delegation of Oman would like once again to reaffirm its position of principle against military pacts. We do not permit foreign military bases on our territory to be used against any other country, inside or outside the region.

We look forward with hope and aspirations to the future and trust that constructive work will be done at the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which is to be held in 1982. We should concentrate our efforts in the forthcoming period on establishing the basis for world peace and security. At the same time and parallel with that action, efforts should be undertaken to bring about the success of multilateral

(Mr. Al-Toubi, Oman)

negotiations in the Committee on Disarmament so that it may achieve significant results. For our part, we should concentrate on calling upon the major Powers, in particular, to carry out their basic and fundamental responsibilities to mankind and to change their present negotiating positions.

The period before the next special session is not a very long one and we should concentrate on the priority issues, which include putting an end to the nuclear arms race as well as the total prohibition of nuclear tests.

In conclusion, we should like to express our readiness to co-operate in all efforts directed towards strengthening international peace and security and the prosperity and progress of our people.

Mr. GURINOVICH (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic)(interpretation from Russian): Mr. Chairman, please accept my congratulations on your election to the important post of Chairman. I should also like to congratulate the other officers of the Committee.

In this statement, the delegation of the Byelorussian SSR intends to dwell on one issue: the new proposal of the Soviet Union on "Urgent measures for reducing the danger of war".

This proposal, together with the USSR memorandum entitled "Peace, disarmament and international security guarantees", comprises a whole range of measures to strengthen peace and improve the international climate. These initiatives confirm once again that the Soviet State has been consistently pursuing the Leninist policy of peace and has been supporting the consolidation of international security and broad international co-operation. They confirm that the Soviet Union takes into account the realities and requirements of the day and is taking energetic and concrete measures to blunt the sharp edge of the danger of war, to rein in the critical heightening of tension and to prevent the threatening development of events encouraged by militaristic imperialism and hegemonism.

The adoption and implementation of these proposals of the Soviet Union, which are contained in documents A/35/241 and A/35/482, would erect a solid barrier against military preparations and ambitions to achieve a one-sided advantage, would do a great deal to limit the possibility of imperialistic forces pursuing a policy of diktat and hegemonism in international relations and would restore the world to a situation in which it would be possible to resolve questions of international security and disarmament in circumstances of détente in which the principles of equal security of States would be observed.

Let us take a detailed look at the urgent measures for reducing the danger of war proposed by the USSR.

The first relates to the non-expansion of military alliances. As members will recall, the States of the socialist community have opposed in principle the policy of blocs. This year, at the May conference of the Political Consultative Committee of the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty, a declaration was adopted which stated, inter alia, that:

"A policy of blocs is intrinsically alien to the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty, which is a defensive alliance of socialist countries. Those States have repeatedly indicated their willingness to dissolve their alliance if the NATO bloc is dismantled at the same time; they have proposed that, as a first step, the military organizations of the two groupings should be abolished, starting with a mutual reduction of military activity. Those proposals still hold good". (A/35/237-S/13948, Annex II, p. 4)

Unfortunately, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) countries have ignored these proposals. They have shown no willingness to take a radical decision. Contrary to United Nations resolutions on disarmament, they have been working intensively to re-equip their material base for waging war. They have been attempting to bring within the orbit of the bloc policy countries which do not belong to NATO. They have been trying to expand both the geographical area of participation in the military bloc and the scope and range of motives for involving NATO in aggressive action in practically any part of the world by declaring it a zone of vital interest to the West. Furthermore, by establishing military bases on the territory of certain States members of the Non-Aligned Movement, they have been undermining the fundamental foreign policy ideology of non-alignment, which is non-participation in the military blocs of other States.

I should also like to draw the Committee's attention to the fact that, in the light of Presidential Doctrine 59, proclaimed by Washington, on "a new nuclear strategy" which legalizes the "limited" use of nuclear weapons the establishment of those bases carries with it certain implications. Do the authors of this criminal doctrine want to use the territories of those countries upon which they have imposed the deployment of American nuclear weapons for extremely dangerous experiments in the use of those weapons in the naive hope that it will be other nations that suffer from this and not the United States?

In these circumstances, and in order to preserve and develop the process of détente, it is essential and a matter of urgency for States which are members of military alliances to refrain at least from actions which would lead to the expansion of existing military-political groupings by including

new States in them, and for States which are not members of existing military-political groupings to refrain from joining such groupings.

During the period of development of the process of détente, the peoples of the world succeeded in bringing about the collapse of military alliances under the control of imperialist countries, such as the South-East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) and the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO). It is, of course, more necessary than ever before for all States to refrain from any action which might lead to the creation of new military-political groupings or to the assigning of military functions to regional organizations which do not have such functions at present. This danger does exist, since some regional organizations are not doing their utmost to avoid being used, if not for the military, then at least for the political interests of imperialistic and hegemonistic forces.

As was made clear from the statement by the representative of the Netherlands on behalf of the nine members of the Common Market, and also from today's statement by the United States representative, the NATO countries are opposed to the idea of the non-expansion of military-political groupings. They even attempt to cover up NATO's aggressive essence and take refuge behind references to the United Nations Charter.

In an attempt to justify and, somehow, to camouflage their flagrantly negative position on urgent measures for reducing the danger of war, and to find a sort of lightning rod, those representatives, with an assiduity worthy of a greater cause, have been flinging all kinds of insinuations, slanderous assertions, misinformation and distortions of fact. The fact that these flagrant fabrications are being repeatedly uttered does not make them true. What is becoming ever more apparent is the unsavoury nature of the attempts made by these delegations to replace consideration by this Committee of genuinely urgent disarmament problems by anything at all, if only it might prove possible to prevent the concerting of forces by Members of the United Nations in support of international peace and security in accordance with the United Nations Charter.

(Mr. Gurinovich, Byelorussian SSR)

We believe that Members of the United Nations will be able to perceive the true essence of the Soviet proposal, which is aimed at reducing the danger of war, and is not as much a figment of the imagination as it may have appeared to one previous speaker and to reject the anti-Charter oratory of supporters of the policy of blocs.

The significance and relevance of the proposal of the USSR for the renunciation by all States, primarily the permanent members of the Security Council and countries linked to them in military agreements of the expansion of their armed forces and of an increase in their conventional armaments would be difficult to exaggerate. From year to year at sessions of the United Nations General Assembly, fresh data are constantly being furnished with regard to the constant increase of armed forces and conventional armaments. But the world is not becoming any more stable because of this. The only thing that is happening is the constant growth of the burden of non-productive military expenditures, and pre-conditions are simply being created for involving small and medium-sized countries in the militaristic adventures of the imperialists and hegemonists. Arms dealers are simply increasing their profits and the economy of various countries is merely becoming ever more dependent on the recklessness and greed of the military-industrial complex. In a word, there is absolutely no benefit in all this for the cause of peace and the welfare of peoples.

It would be sensible to give up the pernicious tendency to expand military forces and increase conventional armaments without any further delay. The draft resolution of the USSR proposes that this is precisely what should be done, with effect from 1 January 1981. This decision would be in keeping with the Final Document of the special session of the Assembly devoted to disarmament, which points out that progress in limiting and subsequent reduction of nuclear armaments would be helped by the parallel adoption of political and international legal measures to strengthen the security of States and by progress in the field of limiting and reducing armed forces and conventional armaments of States which possess nuclear weapons and other States in the relevant areas.

(Mr. Gurinovich, Byelorussian SSR)

Adoption of this concrete and clear-cut Soviet proposal would be an important point of departure and would provide momentum for a further reduction of armed forces and conventional armaments, and for an increase in the volume of resources which could be spent for purposes of the economic and social progress of all peoples, including the peoples of developing countries.

As the Committee will recall, the Soviet Union was the first nuclear Power which, as far back as 1978, issued a declaration that it would never use nuclear weapons against those States which renounced the manufacture or acquisition of such weapons and have none on their territories. The Soviet Union also proposed on this basis that an international convention be concluded on the strengthening of security guarantees for non-nuclear countries. This position of the USSR promoted the further spreading of the idea of concluding this convention, and appropriate instructions were given to the Committee on Disarmament. There followed the unilateral declarations of other nuclear Powers but, as distinct from the undertaking of the USSR, they were accompanied by a number of reservations which were nothing other than loopholes through which these States could at their own discretion avoid keeping this promise not to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear States. It should also be recalled that no nuclear Power, apart from the Soviet Union, supported the resolution adopted in 1972 by the General Assembly on the non-use of force in international relations and the permanent prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons. There were also proposals to involve the Security Council in the process of strengthening security guarantees for non-nuclear countries.

From what I have said, the persistent efforts of the Soviet Union emerge quite clearly, efforts aimed at strengthening security guarantees for non-nuclear States. Unfortunately, in practical terms there has been virtually no progress on this. Talks in the Committee on Disarmament on concluding an international convention in this field have been moving slowly because of the negative positions of a number of Western countries and of China contrary to resolution 34/84, which makes it incumbent upon the Committee on Disarmament:

(Mr. Gurinovich, Byelorussian SSR)

"...to continue the negotiations on this subject on a priority basis during its session in 1980 with a view to their early conclusion with the elaboration of a convention".

This position is particularly alarming because resolutions 34/85, 34/86, in spite of all their differences from the resolution I have mentioned, 34/84, also refer to continuing talks in the Committee on Disarmament. In the light of the slow rate of progress in the talks, the Soviet Union at this session of the General Assembly calls upon States to strive to bring about an early completion of work on concluding an international convention on this subject and has proposed, as one urgent measure to reduce the danger of war and as a first step towards the conclusion of a convention, that all nuclear Powers issue solemn declarations identical in content stating their intent not to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear States which do not have nuclear weapons on their territory. Similar declarations, if they are in keeping with the objective, could be strengthened by an authoritative decision of the United Nations Security Council.

We hope that this approach will help to overcome the difficulties that have arisen and will ultimately ensure genuine guarantees against the use of nuclear weapons against any country which has no nuclear weapons on its territory.

Finally, I should like to turn to the question of the prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests. Everyone is familiar with the positive effects of the Moscow Treaty on the prohibition of nuclear weapons tests in the atmosphere, outer space and under water concluded in 1963. Three nuclear Powers have stopped testing in these environments. This treaty was followed by other important agreements limiting and preventing the nuclear arms race. But, unfortunately, nuclear tests are being continued and, accordingly, nuclear weapons are being constantly further refined and there is still a possibility that these weapons will appear in other countries.

(Mr. Gurinovich, Byelorussian SSR)

A strident challenge to the efforts of the world community to halt the testing of nuclear weapons by all and in all environments was the explosion of a nuclear weapon of very high yield recently carried out by China in the atmosphere. We also find ominous the fact that the Chinese hegemonists have decided to provide their own accompaniment to the consideration at this session, and particularly in the First Committee, of the problems of disarmament. It is time for the international community not merely to give serious thought to this, but to call these arch-advocates of the inevitability of a new war firmly to account for this poisoning of the political atmosphere in the world and of the natural environment around us. According to United Nations estimates, China has carried out dozens of explosions of nuclear weapons in the atmosphere. It has been repeatedly condemned for this in relevant General Assembly resolutions supported by virtually all the Members of the United Nations. Thus we find the reaction of the American Press to the October explosion of a nuclear weapon in the atmosphere by China more than strange. Before that, to judge from estimates in the American press, legitimate concern was being expressed about the effects of radiation even from low-yield explosions. Now, however, they are writing that the radiation is such that no serious problems for the health of the population are foreseen. That is how they put it.

What we have here, therefore, is a situation where those one loves can do no wrong. The interests of reducing the danger of war also require that no State ever carry out any experimental explosion of nuclear weapons. This goal would be served by the early conclusion of an international treaty on the total and complete prohibition of nuclear-weapons tests, with the participation not of the three major nuclear Powers alone, but of the broadest possible number of States, including all the nuclear States. We should like to see an early and successful conclusion of talks on this subject, with the participation of the USSR, the United States and Great Britain, and the abandonment by the two Western countries

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of their delaying tactics in the talks and their refusal to observe already agreed provisions of the draft treaty. We are profoundly convinced that progress in this matter can be promoted by approval of the USSR proposal to appeal to

"all nuclear-weapon States - as an indication of their goodwill and in order to create more favourable conditions for completing the elaboration of the above-mentioned treaty - not to conduct any nuclear explosions within a period of one year beginning from a date to be agreed upon among them, having made in advance appropriate declarations to that effect." (A/35/241, Annex, para. IV (2))

Such an agreement, we believe, should not take up much time, given goodwill on the part of all States. The proposed moratorium on all nuclear explosions could be put into effect as early as the middle of 1981.

However, certain representatives, strange as this may seem, while posing as supporters of the prohibition of nuclear-weapons tests, have at the same time attempted to cast doubt on proposals for a one-year moratorium on all nuclear explosions. Their argument against the moratorium is less than logical. They say that the time is too short, but surely it is desirable to conclude a treaty for a one-year total and complete prohibition on nuclear-weapons testing. They say that observance must be verified, but everyone in the United Nations knows that moratoriums cannot be verified; they are observed. They allege that a moratorium would hinder the conclusion of the treaty on the general and complete prohibition of nuclear-weapons testing, but if we followed this logic to its conclusion we could find ourselves actually arguing against the prohibition of nuclear-weapons testing. It would be more honest if those who are against the moratorium were simply to confess that they are against the achieving of agreement on the complete and total prohibition of nuclear-weapons testing, for it is obvious that that is the case.

Nevertheless, the overwhelming majority of States is in favour of an early conclusion of a treaty on this question. One way or another, even the

(Mr. Gurinovich, Byelorussian SSR)

opponents of this treaty will, in the end, have to come to terms with this. The Soviet Union is doing and will continue to do everything possible to prevent the outbreak of atomic war, to prevent the peoples of the world from falling victim to atomic attacks of any kind, either first strikes or subsequent strikes.

The Soviet Union and other socialist countries have never had and will never have any strategic doctrine other than a defensive one. They have not, and will not entertain, any intention of creating a nuclear first-strike capability. By virtue of the very nature of their social systems, they cannot and will not ever strive to create spheres of influence, to establish military or political control over any region or international system of transport communications. There are no questions that the Soviet Union and the other countries of the socialist community would not be prepared to resolve by political means. The Soviet Union and the other States of the socialist community not only have been making proposals for preventing the threat of war and implementing genuine disarmament measures, but have been backing them up with concrete deeds. This is demonstrated by their position on all the problems involving peace, disarmament, the strengthening of international security and the development of multifaceted co-operation, as well as by their readiness to resolve all problems around the conference table.

This has also been shown by the recent decision of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR to proceed to a further reduction in the level of the defence expenditures of the Soviet Union in 1981 of 70 million rubles compared to 1980. Defence appropriations constitute only 5.7 per cent of the budgetary expenditures of the USSR.

On the basis of what we have said, we are entitled to expect a constructive approach and constructive action on the part of all States in an effort to prevent the danger of war, as well as support for the important and timely Soviet Union proposals of certain urgent measures to achieve this goal.

Mr. FUTSCHER PEREIRA (Portugal): Mr. Chairman, I should like to begin by congratulating you on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee of the General Assembly as well as the other officers of the Committee on their election. I assure you that we have no doubt that under your guidance and with your diplomatic skill the work of this Committee will be carried out in the best possible way.

Once again we meet here to deal with the problems related to disarmament and international security. This year, however, the atmosphere is less encouraging as far as progress in those fields is concerned. It is a secret to no one that international relations have deteriorated significantly lately as a result of the tensions arising from the activities of certain States. Consequently the level of confidence in co-operation among States has declined, and to such an extent that it would indeed be more appropriate to speak not of confidence any more, but of the present level of lack of confidence.

My Government does not believe it possible to have confidence in relations among States when a permanent member of the Security Council invades a small Member nation of this Organization, so as to place it permanently within its zone of influence, shortly after having proposed to this very Committee the text condemning the policy of hegemonism contained in document A/C.1/34/L.1.

As a small country Portugal cannot but express its deep concern at the fact that professions of faith in favour of peace made by some States in the United Nations and in other forums seem in flagrant contradiction to the practices of those same States. What has happened in Afghanistan is an unequivocal example of that dangerous and unacceptable procedure. Such actions do not aid the achievement of any significant progress in the field of disarmament and international security. On the contrary, they tend to lead to an increase in military expenditures, an accumulation of arms and the development of new armaments in a growing process nourished through a feed-back effect. Thus the attainment of objectives sought with great perseverance and for a long time by the international community is jeopardized.

(Mr. Futscher Pereira, Portugal)

As unfortunate as that situation is we believe that this Committee cannot turn its back on the objectives that it has always sought. On the contrary, we think that we must redouble our efforts so that we can achieve more significant progress towards the realization of our common goals.

My country is firmly intent on continuing the process of détente, in the hope that other States will show proof of their goodwill and co-operation. But, as stated before the General Assembly by the Portuguese Minister for Foreign Affairs, not through mere declarations of intent, but through clear attitudes and concrete actions.

In the field of disarmament the effects of the existing tensions in international life make it even more necessary to try to control the present arms race. But because the disarmament process is long and complex and is closely linked to the climate of international relations, my delegation believes it advisable to favour the adoption of practical and verifiable measures of a limited character instead of more comprehensive or ambitious measures that are always more difficult to execute or to monitor.

In that respect my delegation welcomes the establishment within the Committee on Disarmament of various working groups that deal with specific matters such as chemical weapons, negative guarantees of security, radiological weapons and the comprehensive programme of disarmament,

The links between disarmament and the climate of international relations leads my delegation to attribute great importance to any confidence-building measures. My country is thus ready to negotiate in Madrid, at the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, the strengthening of existing confidence-building measures in Europe, as well as the adoption of new ones and we also support the adoption of that type of measure in other areas of the world, once the interested States reach agreement to that effect.

One of the aspects of disarmament that has commended the priority attention of the international community is that of nuclear disarmament. The growing accumulation of nuclear arsenals and the destructive capacity of those weapons is sufficient justification for the concern of world opinion about the consequences of nuclear war.

(Mr. Futscher Pereira, Portugal)

My country understands and shares such preoccupations. But it believes that, to be realistic, any disarmament measures must take into consideration the different structure of the armed forces of the major military Powers. The different level of technological development of States has led some to rely on nuclear weapons for their defence, while others have made their defence dependent mainly on conventional weapons. But the most powerful States of the world obviously base their strength on both types of weapons. For that reason my delegation considers the proposals that tend to concentrate disarmament efforts solely on nuclear disarmament to be inadequate. In fact such selectivity of efforts, which leads to the creation of asymmetry, whereby, on a global level, the burden is placed more upon some States than upon others, tends only to endanger international peace and security. Nor would such selectivity of efforts be in accordance with some of the principles contained in the Final Document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, namely those contained in paragraphs 29 and 30.

It is for those reasons that my delegation will support any initiatives regarding disarmament measures in the field of conventional weapons and armed forces. In particular my delegation now affirms its support for the proposal presented by Denmark at the last substantive session of the Committee on Disarmament calling for a study of all aspects of conventional weapons.

Meanwhile, we support all realistic initiatives aimed at diminishing the danger of an outbreak of war, particularly nuclear war. In keeping with that, Portugal is a Party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and as such participated in the Second Review Conference of Parties to that Treaty.

Although consensus on a final text was not reached, the Conference carried out its mandate. The debates indicated ample areas of agreement. Areas of disagreement were also defined, allowing for concentration on the possibilities of improving the application of the Treaty provisions. Above all, none of the Parties called the Treaty into question. My country is convinced that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons continues to constitute the basis of the system of non-proliferation of those weapons and is an important element in the system of international security.

(Mr. Futscher Pereira, Portugal)

Universal accession to this Treaty would contribute positively towards the strengthening of the latter. For this reason, my delegation calls on those States which have not yet done so to become parties to the Treaty on non-proliferation.

Also as regards the prevention of nuclear war, my delegation believes that the elaboration of a treaty on full prohibition of nuclear tests would be a very positive step. One of the essential elements of that Treaty must be the monitoring mechanism, which we believe to be indispensable for the efficient functioning of any Treaty in this field.

The Portuguese delegation understands and respects the non-nuclear States that seek the strengthening of their security through guarantees by the nuclear States. We hope that the Committee on Disarmament will shortly be able to submit a text concerning the arrangements that in this matter will be acceptable to the interested parties.

In the field of nuclear arms control, the SALT agreements constitute an important achievement and a significant contribution towards the deceleration of the arms race. Unfortunately, international relations have evolved in a manner unfavourable to ratification of the agreements reached in the second phase of the SALT negotiations. My delegation would be happy to see the international situation improve shortly, so as to allow for the ratification of those agreements.

The news that the Soviet Union has finally responded positively to the calls by the United States for the initiation of preliminary negotiations on medium-range nuclear weapons is, in our view, a factor that may help positively to unblock a situation so far unfavourable to the process of disarmament.

My delegation is pleased that the United Nations Conference on Prohibitions or Restrictions of Use of Certain Conventional Armaments Which May be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects was able to reach agreement on incendiary weapons, land mines booby traps and shrapnel weapons that cannot be located in the body by X-rays.

The prohibition or restriction of the use of arms whose effects amply exceed whatever action might be necessary to incapacitate an enemy has the

(Mr. Futscher Pereira, Portugal)

support of my country. We support, therefore, the initiatives aimed at prohibiting new weapons of mass destruction. We believe, none the less, that measures of this sort can only contribute effectively towards the control of armaments if they include weapons or weapon systems that are perfectly identifiable and clearly defined. We cannot support any resolution aiming at the prohibition of a generic class of weapons of mass destruction. Within the same context, my country, since 1925, has been a party to the Geneva Protocols on the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphixiating, Poisonous or other Gases, and of bacteriological methods of warfare. For this reason, we must express our concern at the news that some States have been using weapons prohibited by that agreement. If these indications are correct, the international community may be faced with a situation whereby some of its members have flagrantly violated their international obligations.

The international community cannot remain indifferent to this, and must take all available measures to verify the truth of the reports to which I have just referred. We shall support any initiative to that end. The eventual creation of an investigatory commission which would visit the regions where such arms were allegedly used would be especially favoured by my delegation.

The news of the alleged use of the weapons outlawed by the Geneva Protocols leads us to call attention to one of the most essential and delicate aspects of the disarmament process. I refer to the question of verification. Verification is indispensable for most of the disarmament agreements, in order to constrain one party from eventually violating its obligations, or to ensure that that agreement will be complied with, allowing the parties to verify any eventual allegation of violations. The existence of monitoring mechanisms in the disarmament agreements introduces an element of certainty in the relations between States that contribute towards the creation and strengthening of a climate of confidence. And confidence is the preliminary condition for any progress in this field.

One of the most important subjects to be dealt with by this Committee is that of the declaration of the decade of the 1980s as the second Disarmament Decade.

(Mr. Futscher Pereira, Portugal)

After a decade dedicated to disarmament in which the arms race continued and, generally speaking, the results achieved were far from what we had hoped it would not be excessive to devote a second decade to the problems of disarmament. But we do not believe that our aims will be attained by the fixing of over-ambitious objectives unconnected with the realities of international life. Disarmament is not an exclusively voluntary endeavour independent of the climate of international relations. On the contrary, the entire process of détente is closely connected with that climate. Unfortunately, we are forced to recognize that, today, the state of international relations is not the most propitious for the achievement of the objectives of disarmament. We must seek all that is possible in the present circumstances, although it may fall short of our hopes. Realism must be a constant in our efforts, and therefore we cannot support, because they seem unrealistic, proposals aimed at the establishment of rigid objectives or that propose time-frames or even dates for the realization of general or specific objectives. In our opinion, we should rather use the second Disarmament Decade to publicize the dangers of the present arms race so as to make world opinion aware of its possible consequences.

Before concluding, I should like to allude to what will certainly become one of the most important events in the second Disarmament Decade. I refer, obviously, to the second special session of the General Assembly dedicated to disarmament, scheduled to take place in 1982.

The first special session, in 1978, accomplished an important task. Since then, some progress has been achieved, particularly the adoption of measures to be included in a comprehensive disarmament programme and the entrusting of the drafting of such a programme to the Committee on Disarmament. We hope that progress will continue so that the next special session of the General Assembly will be able to consider the text of the programme now being negotiated in that Committee. We also feel that the special session will offer us a good opportunity to ponder the application of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly dedicated to disarmament.

The second special session deserves careful preparation so that its results will meet with our expectations. My delegation shall give its fullest co-operation to this end.

Mr. SOURINHO (Lao People's Democratic Republic) (interpretation from French): Mr. Chairman, since this is the first time that I take the floor in the First Committee, may I extend to you, on behalf of my delegation, my heartfelt congratulations on your brilliant election to the chairmanship of this very important Committee. I am convinced that your vast knowledge of the items on the agenda of the First Committee will enable you to acquit yourself honourably of the tasks entrusted to you by the General Assembly. May I take this occasion also to extend the warmest congratulations of my delegation to the other officers of the Committee on their election.

(Mr. Sourinho, Lao People's  
Democratic Republic)

Almost two and a half years have elapsed since the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament which was rightly considered a decisive turning-point in the efforts of peoples in quest of a safer more secure world through the promotion and implementation of effective measures aimed at halting the unbridled nuclear and conventional arms race and reversing and reducing existing stocks up to their complete elimination. Today we are at the half-way mark between the first special session of the United Nations devoted to disarmament and the second, which is scheduled to be held in 1982 and to carry out an evaluation of the progress achieved in the implementation of the decisions taken by the first session, that is, the progress achieved in the field of disarmament.

In this connexion, it is disturbing to note that in spite of the new impetus given to the disarmament effort by the tenth special session of the General Assembly, the arms race, far from slowing down, continues unabated and is even being intensified, as is borne out by world military expenditure figures which this year amount to the astronomical sum of \$500 billion, that is, approximately 6 per cent of the total world product. The fundamental cause of this situation so deeply disquieting for the peace and security of mankind resides, in our view, in the deliberate will of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) circles to destroy the existing balance of forces, or as it is called "the balance of terror", to assure NATO's military superiority over the Warsaw Pact bloc in order to maintain its world supremacy.

This is clearly reflected, inter alia, in NATO's weapons conversion plans, in the decision to install medium-range missiles in Western Europe, in the increased activities of the United States in the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf, in the adoption by Washington of the new and dangerous nuclear strategy as personified by what is called Directive 59, in the unjustifiable and unjustified refusal of the United States to honour its commitments by deliberately stalling on the ratification of the SALT II treaty, thus endangering its entry into force, in the unilateral suspension

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Democratic Republic)

by that country of negotiations with the Soviet Union to transform the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace, as well as in the unilateral suspension by the United States of negotiations on the limitation of international arms trade and supplies.

Those irrefutable facts prove, if need be, that the NATO militarist circles bear the primary responsibility for the arms race, which could accelerate further in the months and years to come, those circles which, not just recently but over a period of three decades, have refused to undertake serious negotiations with a view to ensuring a world of peace and security founded on disarmament. The Soviet Union memorandum, entitled "peace, disarmament and international security guarantees" of 24 September 1980, distributed under the symbol A/35/482, enables even the most sceptical to see clearly the patient and untiring efforts made by the Soviet Union and other socialist countries in this vitally important field.

Accordingly, it is in the interests of the cessation of the arms race and of disarmament, and hence of the survival of mankind, that the non-aligned countries and the developing countries in general - which suffer more than others from the evil consequences of the arms race in the form of ever more frequent interference in their domestic affairs by militarily more powerful countries, recourse to the use or threat of the use of force, including the threat to teach smaller and weaker sovereign States lessons, occupation, economic blockade and denial of access to natural communications routes - understand clearly where the obstacles lie which so far have thwarted all the United Nations disarmament efforts.

(Mr. Sourinho, Lao People's  
Democratic Republic)

While it is true that the super-Powers bear responsibility for the existing stockpiles of conventional and nuclear weapons, which sometime ago reached an intolerable threshold, it is no less true that, with a view to putting an end to this situation which through technical error or miscalculation risks plunging the world into a nuclear holocaust, we distinguish clearly which of the super-Powers is the fundamental cause of this situation and, therefore, demand that it cease its activities which could have incalculable consequences.

Recourse to the proverb which says that deeds speak louder than words, would enable us to place ourselves in the right position, we believe to contribute to the solution of the problem, stop putting an end in the foreseeable future to endless debates which began over 30 years ago in this Committee and elsewhere on the question of disarmament. It is more obvious today than ever, by reason of the nuclear danger which hangs over the whole of mankind like the sword of Damocles, that we cannot and should not continue to adopt the same attitude which consists in voluntarily refraining from taking any action or saying anything that could displease either of the two super-Powers or even displease the one to which we are bound for various reasons.

Peace, security and the survival of the human race compel us to join others in demanding with the necessary vigour of the instigators of the arms race - namely, the imperialists and reactionaries of every kind - that they abandon their new arms programmes, that they stop the manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction, missiles, neutron weapons, chemical and other weapons, and that they negotiate seriously with their partners to halt the arms race, reverse its trend and progressively reduce existing stocks until they are totally eliminated.

At the same time we should demand of the hegemonists and expansionists in Peking that they stop preaching their obsolete theory of the inevitability of the third world war, because such sinister precepts produce only the effect of arousing mistrust and runs counter to the spirit and the letter of resolution S-10/2 adopted by the tenth special session of the General Assembly

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devoted to disarmament which advocates the creation of a climate of confidence to contribute to the promotion of disarmament. This strange behaviour, added to the spurious accusations levelled against some countries, including my own, concerning the use of chemical weapons, to the shameful slanders against the Soviet Union and its responsible conduct in the field of disarmament and, lastly, to the recent explosion by China of a powerful nuclear device the radioactive clouds of which at present whirl in the skies over many countries, does no more than hinder the efforts of peoples desperately striving to achieve general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

With reference to the views put forward by the United States against my country in connexion with chemical weapons, I shall merely reply that, apart from the absurd nature of the statement, such slanders seek to mask the shameful acts of that country against my country and other peoples of Indo-China in resorting to such weapons during the period of the so-called second Indo-Chinese war.

The question of disarmament and arms control is of interest to all peoples and countries, large or small. My delegation, like many others, was profoundly gratified at the decisions taken by the tenth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, in particular the decision relating to the disarmament machinery.

As is well known, by virtue of that decision a deliberative body, namely, the Disarmament Commission embracing all States Members of the United Nations, and a negotiating body, the Committee on Disarmament, were set up while ensuring a priori the principle of representation and effectiveness in the negotiations on one of the, if not the, most complex and delicate questions posed to the international community, namely, the question of disarmament and arms control.

(Mr. Sourinho, Lao People's Democratic Republic)

We all know too how great was the will of those two bodies to achieve the expected results in discharging the task entrusted to them almost two years ago. However, consideration of their reports, particularly of the second report of the Committee on Disarmament, which is the true motive force behind the disarmament process, has led us to feel great concern at what has been achieved by that Committee. In fact, very little as to substance has been achieved to date. Therefore, it is important for that Committee at its future sessions resolutely to embark upon substantive negotiations and for those States which in one way or another have prevented it from taking such a course to remove their obstacles and show the necessary political will with a view to making headway towards the results so ardently and universally desired, and this should be done before the next special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

We believe that it is the duty of the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session to take a decision along these lines and also to consider and support any proposal likely to promote disarmament measures, in particular the proposal or, rather, the set of proposals of the Soviet Union, contained in document A/C.1/35/L.1, which because of its constructive character and timeliness has already been very favourably received by almost all the delegations of the developing countries, including my own. In order to save the time and, therefore, the money of the United Nations, I shall not comment at length and in detail on the positive aspects of those proposals, which, incidentally, have already been so eloquently and convincingly explained by Ambassador Troyanovsky in his statement at the fifth meeting of the Committee on 17 October last. Furthermore, many representatives of countries who spoke subsequently, in particular the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Byelorussian SSR, who has just now spoken before me, have also highlighted in sound and very pertinent arguments the positive aspects of the Soviet proposal.

I shall simply confine myself to saying, on behalf of my delegation, that this new and judicious initiative of the Soviet Union bears witness yet again to the constructive attitude and the unswerving attachment of that country and its people, which lost 20 million brave citizens during the Second World War, to the cause of disarmament and, hence, to the cause of world peace and security.

(Mr. Sourinho, Lao People's Democratic  
Republic)

Laos and the Laotian people, which are pursuing the same noble objectives, can but welcome this initiative and give it their whole-hearted support.

In conclusion, my delegation wishes to point out that, in the light of the meagre results achieved in the last 30 years by the unceasing efforts of the international community in the field of disarmament, our world, which lives in despair and is weighed down by the fear of a nuclear holocaust, clearly prefers to hear the gospel of peace, détente and disarmament rather than that of confrontation and the inevitability of a third world war, which, were it to break out, would spare no one, including those who today enjoy playing the part of prophet of that great calamity.

The CHAIRMAN: I shall now call on those representatives who have expressed the wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

May I remind the members of the Committee of the relevant provisions of General Assembly resolution 34/401, which limits the number of interventions in the exercise of the right of reply for any delegation at a given meeting to two per item and that the first intervention is limited to 10 minutes, while the second intervention is limited to five minutes.

Mr. AWANIS (Iraq) (interpretation from Arabic): My delegation would like to answer the allegations and distortions contained in the statement of the representative of Iran yesterday when he departed from the items under consideration.

It would appear that he did not wish to speak about disarmament but about the dispute between Iraq and Iran and wanted, rather to attack Iraq and shed belated tears with regard to the principles of the United Nations on the non-use of force and non-intervention in the affairs of other countries.

In fact, it is Iran which has defied and contravened those principles by using force against Iraq. It started to shell Iraqi border areas and cities with heavy artillery, in addition to bombing our installations and houses. Those attacks began on 4 September 1980. That date marked the start of the war of aggression and the use of force against Iraq; the date 22 September 1980 was when Iraq began making use of its legitimate right to defend its own people and the country in self-defence. It was only normal that Iraq should repulse the Iranian forces far from Iraqi cities and populations in order to assure sovereignty over its own territory and Shatt al Arab, its only outlet to the sea.

As a result of official statements by Iranian officials about their expansionist ambitions against Iraq and the other Arab countries of the Gulf, it became necessary for Iraq to guarantee its sovereignty and that of the other countries of the Gulf.

With regard to interference in the internal affairs of other countries, delegations will surely recall the various statements of the Iranian authorities designed to export their revolution to neighbouring countries. Not satisfied with the statements, Iran did in fact try to interfere in our internal affairs.

(Mr. Aronis, Iraq)

My delegation is surprised at the statement of the representative of Iran to the effect that he does not agree with the acquisition of territory by force, while Iran itself has annexed Greater and Lesser Tunbs and Abu Musa. We also have statements by Iran's leaders, notably Khomeini. Has the latter decided to give up? Has he decided to follow the path of righteousness, soundness and reason? Or should we believe in Khomeini's statement made yesterday that he would not put an end to the fighting until he has exported his revolution to Baghdad?

Mr. MOJIB (Iran): I am pleased to note that the representative of Iraq has acknowledged the fact that his Government does fall within the category of oppressive and expansionist régimes which we mentioned in our statement.

Now that the representative of Iraq has identified his Government with aggression and expansion in the Persian Gulf region, it would be more advisable for him to advise his Government to switch its outlook towards neighbourly relations instead of trying to mislead this Committee by presenting baseless allegations and claims.

Whatever Iraq's excuse may be, the fact remains that it is the Iraqi army which has violated the territorial integrity of Iran and not vice versa. The fact also remains that it is Iraq which is indiscriminately shelling populated areas of Iran and launching surface-to-surface missiles against them and not vice versa.

(Mr. Poini, Iran)

It is very amusing that the framework of the arguments that Iraq tries to present in order to justify its aggression is identical to that of Israel in trying to justify its aggression against the Arab people.

I should like to remind the representative of Iraq that his arguments in defence of aggression will have the same success in the international community as the arguments of Israel have had so far.

Mr. AWANIS (Iraq) (interpretation from Arabic): I am sorry to have to speak for a second time in exercise of my right of reply.

I am very surprised by the statement just made by the representative of Iran. I have not talked about occupation. I said that Iraq has exercised its legitimate right of self-defence and that Iraq has said in the United Nations, in the statement made by the Minister for Foreign Affairs to the Security Council and the General Assembly, that Iraq has no ambition to occupy Irani territory. We are simply exercising our natural and legitimate right to self-defence.

The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.